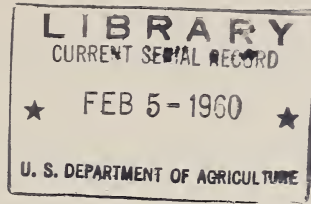


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The Job of the **FEDERAL MEAT INSPECTOR**



AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE
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Prepared by
Meat Inspection Division
Agricultural Research Service
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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THE JOB OF THE FEDERAL MEAT INSPECTOR

Helping to guard the Nation's meat supply is the job of the Federal meat inspector. His work provides a vital service to American consumers, livestock producers, meatpackers, and processors. He assures cleanliness, wholesomeness, and proper labeling of meat and meat products entering consumer channels.

Federal laws now require individual inspection of animals prior to slaughter, the meat processed, and the meat products produced for interstate and foreign commerce. All inspection in connection with the slaughter of animals is supervised by graduate veterinarians who work as veterinary meat inspectors. Meat inspectors who conduct the nonveterinary phases of inspection assist these veterinarians in discharging their important responsibilities.

Inspection is carried out by the Meat Inspection Division, Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture. The Federal meat inspection service was established by Congress on June 30, 1906.

Today, Federally inspected meatpacking plants produce over 80 percent of the commercial meat and meat food products in the United States. Federal meat inspection thus has become an integral part of our livestock-raising and meatpacking industries, which contribute to the Nation's agricultural and industrial economy.

The Meat Inspection Division has the following broad responsibilities:

- Inspecting sanitation of meatpacking establishments.
 - Inspecting animals before slaughter.
 - Inspecting carcasses and internal organs of animals after slaughter.
 - Inspecting meat processing and preparation of meat food products.
 - Destroying material found unfit for food purposes.
 - Supervising application of the stamp or label indicating Federal approval.
 - Maintaining chemical, bacteriological, pathological, and zoological laboratories to furnish inspectors with information needed in making proper decisions.
- The Meat Inspection Division needs alert, competent inspectors.

QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants must be at least 18 years old. They must have spent at least 3 years working with animals or meat--on the farm, as a veterinarian's assistant, in stockyards, in packing plants, or in related jobs. Education may be substituted for experience under certain conditions.

Qualifications are listed in the U. S. Civil Service Commission's announcement of an Examination for Positions of Meat and Poultry Inspectors, available at first- and second-class post offices.

Any citizen--regardless of race, color, or creed--who meets the entrance requirements may file an application with the Board of U. S. Civil Service Examiners in his area.

Applicants for the position of meat inspector must qualify not only in ability but also in character and personal health. To be considered for appointment, they must qualify in a competitive civil-service examination. Selections are made in regular order from lists of eligibles established as a result of the examinations.

Because physical fitness is necessary for this work, all prospective appointees must meet rigid physical requirements in an examination by a Federal medical officer.

The entrance grade for meat inspector positions is GS-5; the annual starting salary for this grade is \$4,040. Meat inspector positions range from GS-5 through GS-11 with base salary from \$4,040 to \$8,230. The table on the last page gives information on automatic increases. New appointees as GS-5 meat inspectors receive instruction in the provisions of applicable laws, regulations, and manuals, and in inspection methods. They first receive systematic on-the-job training in the inspection of heads and carcasses of slaughtered animals.

All GS-5 meat inspectors must develop the ability to use a knife with skill and dexterity in order to perform inspections and, at the same time, avoid injury. Because the work must be performed in rooms that are often noisy, hot, and humid and under hazardous conditions such

as slippery floors, suspended carcasses, overhead rails, and moving conveyors, the inspectors must be mentally alert and physically fit.



Inspecting suspended carcasses on overhead rail.

TYPE OF WORK

When they complete their training, GS-5 meat inspectors may be assigned the following types of work:

- Seeing that all operations in assigned area are performed in a sanitary manner and that carcasses and parts are kept clean.

- Examining heads of slaughtered meat-producing animals by location, incision, and viewing cervical lymph nodes for evidence of diseased or abnormal conditions; tagging the heads and carcasses with such conditions for more thorough inspection and final disposition by a veterinary meat inspector.

- Examining eviscerated carcasses for surface bruises, sores, abscesses, en-

larged joints, and broken bones; observing, palpating, and, if necessary, incising kidneys and principal lymph nodes in search of evidence of disease or abnormality.

- Examining surface of spine for evidence of tuberculosis or other disease lesions.

- Overseeing the removal by establishment employees of localized defects and the cleaning and disinfecting of equipment used in such operations.

- Retaining suspicious carcasses for the attention of a veterinary meat inspector.

- Supervising the branding of carcasses passed without restrictions, and maintaining required control over carcasses held for further examination and over condemned parts.



Inspecting head of slaughtered carcass.

The following inspection assignments are regularly performed by grade GS-7 meat inspectors and may be performed

by grade GS-5 inspectors for training purposes:

- Overseeing the work in the viscera separating department. This work includes separation, washing, and destruction of viscera (internal organs); tanking or other disposition of condemned carcasses and parts; the refrigerating and handling of carcasses in the coolers; rendering of animal fats; the loading shipping, cutting, boning, and trimming of carcasses; and maintaining of sanitary equipment and conditions.

- Inspecting the viscera of meat-producing animals for evidence of disease, parasitic infestation, or abnormalities by incising the various lymph nodes involved and viewing and palpating the liver, heart, lungs, intestines, and spleen of each slaughtered animal.

- Condemning the viscera as unfit for human food in certain readily recognizable conditions, or tagging the carcass and parts to hold for final veterinary inspection.

- Making a visual and digital ante mortem examination of meat-producing animals to detect diseases or abnormalities that would render them unfit for human food.

- Segregating animals that show definite symptoms of disease, excessive abnormalities, or emaciation for diagnosis and disposition by a veterinary meat inspector.

Meat inspectors in grade GS-7 or in higher grades may be responsible for overseeing the inspection of packing plants producing diversified lines of meat products where numerous regulations and requirements must be applied simultaneously. Some positions are located at or near ports of entry where large and diversified quantities of meat and meat food products are imported into the United States; inspection duties at these ports are conducted by grade GS-9 meat inspectors.

Meat inspectors also serve as inspectors-in-charge of field stations or as supervisors of large-scale processing operations conducted in a number of meat-packing establishments comprising the larger field stations. Such positions are classified in grade GS-9 or GS-11.

The Meat Inspection Division follows a "promotion from within" policy. All inspectors are in line for promotions, which are based on demonstrated individual ability.



Inspector examining viscera.

LOCATIONS

Establishments are located in over 500 cities throughout the United States and possessions. Inspectors are assigned to stations where their services are most needed. However, the Division attempts to fill assignments according to expressed preference of the inspectors. Where a transfer is in the best interests of the Division, the transfer of the inspector, his dependents, and personal effects, will be at Government expense. Under certain conditions, inspectors may transfer at their own expense to headquarter points of their choosing.

HOURS

Inspectors work a scheduled 40-hour week, or 8 hours a day, Monday through Friday. Often, overtime and holiday work

are required. Overtime rates of pay--time and one-half for those employees whose salary rate does not exceed \$5,985 per annum--apply to work beyond the first 8 hours on Monday through Friday and for any work performed on Saturday or Sunday. Holiday and night assignments also bring premium pay.

BENEFITS

Because meat inspector positions are filled under the Federal civil-service career-conditional appointment system, employees receive coverage under the U. S. Civil Service Retirement System. The employees' contribution of $6\frac{1}{2}$ percent of his basic salary to the retirement fund is withheld from his salary each payday. Employees are paid every 2 weeks on established paydays.

Annual leave is earned on the basis of length of service. Employees with less than 3 years of service earn 13 days of annual leave with pay each year. Employees with 3 to 15 years of service earn 20 days of annual leave each year. Employees with 15 or more years of service earn 26 days of annual leave each year. Time spent in military service is credited toward the total length of service.

Regardless of length of service, all employees earn 13 days of sick leave each year. Unused sick leave, which accumulates without limitation, affords excellent protection against the expenses of prolonged illness.

Employees also have the protection of unemployment compensation and are

compensated for medical and hospital care in case of occupational injuries. Eligible employees are automatically insured under a group life-insurance plan; no extra medical examination is required. The amount of insurance depends on the basic salary of the employee. For example, if an employee's annual basic salary is \$4,040, he will be insured for \$5,000. Through payroll deduction, the employee pays 25 cents per \$1,000 of insurance each biweekly pay period.

During the probationary period of 1 year, the new GS-5 meat inspector's competence on the job is observed. He must learn to perform inspection work in a satisfactory manner in his first year in order to be continued in the service. At the end of 3 years, career-conditional meat inspectors automatically acquire full career status.

OTHER INFORMATION

Information regarding meat-inspector examinations is available at all first- and second-class post offices, at U. S. Civil Service Commission offices, and at any office of the Meat Inspection Division.

The bulletin "The Inspection Stamp as a Guide to Wholesome Meat," published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, describes the operation of the Federal meat inspection service. A copy may be obtained free from any meat-inspection station or purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., for 15 cents.

ANNUAL SALARY FOR SELECTED GRADES IN MEAT INSPECTION SERVICE¹

Grade	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	(Longevity)		
								X	Y	Z
5	\$4,040	\$4,190	\$4,340	\$4,490	\$4,640	\$4,790	\$4,940	\$5,090	\$5,240	\$5,390
7	4,980	5,130	5,280	5,430	5,580	5,730	5,880	6,030	6,180	6,330
8	5,470	5,620	5,770	5,920	6,070	6,220	6,370	6,520	6,670	6,820
9	5,985	6,135	6,285	6,435	6,585	6,735	6,885	7,035	7,185	7,335
11	7,030	7,270	7,510	7,750	7,990	8,230		8,470	8,710	8,950

¹ Satisfactory performance provides automatic increases of \$150 per year in grades GS-5 through GS-9; and increases of \$240 every 18 months in grade GS-11.



The "little purple stamp" used for marking carcasses and products that have passed inspection. The number identifies the establishment where the product was prepared.

